

Making the Common Cold *Uncommon*



Some say taking Vitamin C reduces our chance of catching colds by boosting your immune system. An even better way to ward off the cold virus is to prevent it from entering your body in the first place. The virus gains entry through the nose, mouth, and eyes.



While you cannot avoid being exposed to colds when people cough or sneeze in public, you can directly sidestep germs by washing your hands several times a day. Hands come into contact with just about everything. Think how often you touch faucets in public bathrooms, or doorknobs, or stair railings. All those surfaces and many others have various kinds of germs. Then you use your hands to rub your eyes or pick up food that you then put in your mouth.

Colds are frequently transmitted by just three common, everyday habits and activities. Washing your hands, however, removes those germs and thus cuts down on the chances you will catch a cold.





Cooking Fried Plantains

To those who do not know the difference, plantains look like oversized bananas. Plantains are not fruit that you would cut up and put in a bowl of corn flakes. While plantains are shaped like bananas and have a fragrant banana-like smell, they are rarely eaten raw. Plantains are a cooked side dish for many Cuban meals. They are widely popular and add a sweet accent to any meal.

Fried plantains are as sweet as custard. Called maduros, which translated from Spanish means “ripe ones,” fried plantains are often served with spiced pork and many other Cuban dishes. The results will be tasty whenever maduros are added to any meal.

The key to the perfect maduros is finding ripe plantains. You can find them in most grocery stores that sell foreign fruits and vegetables. When plantains are green, they taste starchy and plain like potatoes. It is only when the plantains are fully ripe that the sweet banana flavor comes out. A medium-ripe plantain is yellow with some black spots like a banana. A fully ripe plantain is completely black. Even a thoroughly blackened plantain remains firm, making it perfect for cooking. The perfect plantain looks like rotten fruit to the untrained shopper!

Plantains are harder to peel than bananas. To get to the fruit of these golden treasures, slice off the ends of the plantain. Then, cut it into three-inch slices. Make a lengthwise slice into the skin of each piece. Next, use your fingernails to pry off the peel. Cut the plantain pieces diagonally into one-half inch slices. Younger cooks will need a parent to observe.

Pour one cup of vegetable oil to a depth of one-half inch into a heavy frying pan and heat to 350° Fahrenheit. Add the plantain slices. Fry them until they turn a crusty brown. Last, place the plantains on a plate covered with paper towels to drain. Serve your sweet treats at once!

<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 5 LA.A.2.2.2 Author's Purpose Form C</p>

Name _____ **Date** _____

Directions: Read the article “Making the Common Cold Uncommon”, then circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. What was the author's purpose in writing this article?
 - A. to encourage readers to take Vitamin C
 - B. to make readers understand how dirty their hands are
 - C. to explain how to reduce the chances of catching a cold
 - D. to persuade readers not to touch anything during the day

2. Why does the author say, “Think how often you touch faucets in public bathrooms, or doorknobs, or stair railings”?
 - A. to convince you not to touch any surfaces in public
 - B. to make you aware of how easy it is to get germs on your hands
 - C. to suggest that you should avoid public places whenever possible
 - D. to warn you about putting things in your mouth after you have touched something

3. With which statement would the author of “Making the Common Cold Uncommon” MOST likely agree?
 - A. Avoid being exposed to colds by not going out in public.
 - B. If people washed their hands more often, colds would be eliminated.
 - C. Taking extra Vitamin C is the best way to reduce your chance of catching colds.
 - D. Washing your hands frequently reduces the chances of germs entering your body.

Directions: Read the passage “Cooking Fried Plantains”, then circle the letter of the correct answer.

4. The author wants the reader to think that plantains taste best when they are
 - A. raw.
 - B. green.
 - C. cut up.
 - D. fully ripe.

5. Why did the author write “Cooking Fried Plantains”?
 - A. to tell readers about the history of plantains and bananas
 - B. to encourage readers to prepare more foreign food dishes
 - C. to give readers information about a popular food from another country
 - D. to teach readers how to tell the difference between plantains and bananas

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Answer Key – Making the Common Cold Uncommon/Cooking Fried Plantains

LA.A.2.2.2: The student identifies the author's purpose as stated or implied in text (including recognizing when a text is intended primarily to persuade). The student also identifies ways an author's perspective influences text.

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